

of enriching educational programs and recreational activities.

Over the past 11 years, the Eighth Avenue Senior Center has integrated a variety of services integral to this elderly population, which it otherwise would not have had access to. This includes providing meals, bilingual information, English and citizenship classes, health services, and housing assistance.

This center also plays an important role in coordinating town hall meetings, assisting senior members in meeting their housing needs, and educating the community on the importance of exercising their voting rights. Because of these services, the Eighth Avenue Senior Center creates a sense of community and enhancement for the elderly population living in Brooklyn.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 11th anniversary of the Eighth Avenue Senior Center, and join with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to recognize their outstanding service to the elderly Asian-American population in Brooklyn.

#### NUCLEAR MEDICINE WEEK

#### HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 4, 2004*

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Mr. WOLF and I rise today to remind our colleagues that this week, October 3 through October 9, is Nuclear Medicine Week. Nuclear Medicine Week is the first week in October every year and is an annual celebration initiated by the Society of Nuclear Medicine. Each year, Nuclear Medicine Week is celebrated internationally at hospitals, clinics, imaging centers, educational institutions, corporations, and more.

We are particularly proud to note that the Society of Nuclear Medicine is headquartered in Reston, Virginia. The Society of Nuclear Medicine is an international scientific and professional organization of more than 15,000 members dedicated to promoting the science, technology and practical applications of nuclear medicine. We commend the Society staff and its professional members for their outstanding work in the field of nuclear medicine and for their dedication to caring for people with cancer and other serious and life-threatening illnesses that can be diagnosed, managed, and treated with medical isotopes via nuclear medicine procedures.

With nuclear medicine, health care providers can use a safe, noninvasive procedure to gather information about a patient's condition that might otherwise be unavailable or have to be obtained through surgery or more expensive diagnostic tests. Nuclear medicine procedures often identify abnormalities very early in the progression of a disease—long before some medical problems are apparent with other diagnostic tests. This early detection allows a disease to be treated early in its course, when there may be a more successful prognosis.

An estimated 16 million nuclear medicine imaging and therapeutic procedures are performed each year in the United States. Of these, 40–50 percent are cardiac exams and 35–40 percent are oncology related. Nuclear medicine procedures are among the safest di-

agnostic imaging tests available. The amount of radiation from a nuclear medicine procedure is comparable to that received during a diagnostic x-ray.

Nuclear medicine tests, also known as scans, examinations, or procedures, are safe and painless. In a nuclear medicine test, small amounts of medical isotopes are introduced into the body by injection, swallowing, or inhalation. A special camera, PET or gamma camera, is then used to take pictures of your body. The camera does this by detecting the medical isotope in the target organ, bone or tissue and thus forming images that provide data and information about that area of your body. This is how nuclear medicine differs from an x-ray, ultrasound or other diagnostic test—it determines the presence of disease based on function rather than anatomy.

Recently, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced its decision to approve coverage of positron emission tomography or PET for Medicare beneficiaries who have suspected Alzheimer's disease. This decision will allow physicians to obtain an early and more definitive diagnosis and to begin treatment at the time when it provides the best chance of prolonging cognitive function for our Medicare beneficiaries.

Some of the more frequently performed nuclear medicine procedures include:

Bone scans to examine orthopedic injuries, fractures, tumors or unexplained bone pain;

Heart scans to identify normal or abnormal blood flow to the heart muscle, measure heart function or determine the existence or extent of damage to the heart muscle after a heart attack;

Breast scans that are used in conjunction with mammograms to more accurately detect and locate cancerous tissue in the breasts;

Liver and gallbladder scans to evaluate liver and gallbladder function;

Cancer imaging to detect tumors and determine the severity, staging, of various types of cancer;

Treatment of thyroid diseases and certain types of cancer;

Brain imaging to investigate problems within the brain itself or in blood circulation to the brain; and

Renal imaging in children to examine kidney function.

Unfortunately, the field of nuclear medicine is not attracting enough incoming students to fill the current demand for nuclear medicine technologists—usually called NMTs. Currently, there is approximately an 18 percent vacancy of NMTs as determined by the American Hospital Association, AHA. By 2010, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, BLS, projects that the U.S. will need an additional 8,000 NMTs to fill the projected demand created by the aging workforce and expanding senior population. Over the next 20 years, the BLS expects that there will be a 140-percent increase in the demand for imaging services. The use of diagnostic imaging services has been increasing by approximately 4 percent a year, even as the number of certified NMTs and registered radiologic technologists has remained stable. As a result, imaging technologists often work longer shifts, and patients can face weeks of delay for routine exams.

A similar situation is developing for nuclear medicine physicians. According to the American Board of Medical Specialties, there currently are 4,087 certified nuclear medicine

physicians in the United States. At the same time, the number of physician training programs is also declining, exacerbating the future shortage.

Over the next 20 years, the number of people over the age of 65 is expected to double at the exact same time when the Nation will face shortages of medical personnel—including nurses, NMTs, physicians, laboratory personnel, and other specialists. With an increasing number of people needing specialized care—such as nuclear medicine-coupled with an inadequate workforce, our Nation quickly could face a healthcare crisis of serious proportions with limited access to quality cancer care, particularly in traditionally underserved areas.

We encourage our colleagues to support Nuclear Medicine Week and to support increased funding for programs so that our nation will have a sufficient supply of nuclear medicine physicians and technologists to care for all patients in need of nuclear medicine procedures and related care.

#### TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN SCOTT ABERNATHY

#### HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 4, 2004*

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Stephen Scott Abernathy of Centerville, Indiana. He died on Saturday, September 25, 2004 of injuries resulting from a motorcycle accident.

Upon graduating from Centerville High School in 1995, Scott nobly served four years with the United States Marine Corps, where he joined the rugby team. He served as the assistant wrestling coach at Avon High School from 1999–2001 and graduated magna cum laude from Indiana University in 2003.

Scott settled back in Wayne County and became a member of American Legion Post 18 and the Centerville Christian Church.

Mr. Speaker, I express my heartfelt condolences as well as those of the United States Congress to Scott's parents, Stephen and Barbara; his brother, David of Richmond; his niece, Kaytlyn; and his grandparents, James and Josephine Williamson of Munster, Indiana.

Stephen Scott Abernathy was a role model for all Americans and led a life of great quality. All those who knew him well will sorely miss him.

#### IN HONOR OF THE OPENING OF THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART

#### HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 4, 2004*

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise today to commemorate the opening of New York's newest museum, located in my Congressional District in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood. The Rubin Museum of Art (RMA), a cultural and educational institution dedicated to the art of the Himalayan region, opens this week with a series of fascinating exhibitions and programs.